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Dealing with the Trauma of Separation: A Case Study

Marriage the most important institution of the Hindu culture, binds two people and their families together. Considered to be a sacred ceremony and continuing since last many lives. Such thoughts, ideas, beliefs are embedded in the Indian Culture.

Interestingly, if the two people involved in the marriage are not even happy together, but they have to bear the trauma of it all. Trauma or mental illness, the pain is there.

At times a question comes to my mind, as to when it is trauma then why pain. Trauma is accompanied with pain. Pain signifies the attachment with the each other. This signifies that the two people were emotionally attached to each other and separation gives a whole amount of trauma and mental illness.

One such case, I met in my life, very close to me, revealed the trauma of separation and the strategies to deal with it. The lady, of principles and ethics. Sounds too unusual, a person with so staunch beliefs and principles can also face the trauma of relationship. But it is true, life never came easy to her since her marriage.

Marriage symbolizes brightness, happiness, very colourful and all that is so fairy tale type, but the actual reality is beyond imagination. Same was the case with her, she was on the seventh heaven, ready to embark on her new journey. The journey began so well, they both had a perfect compatibility score, even after so much of elder dominance. Life was moving on smoothly they had a beautiful daughter, but then suddenly their life changed. It seemed as if somebody had

twisted the wheel of luck against them. The husband met with an accident that lead to partial memory loss and leg fracture. The in-laws en-cashed the situation and created all sort of mess they could in her life. They did not let her meet the ailing husband who had some traces of memory of the wife and the daughter.

Time and life were moving so fast that life was changing every second, worsening the situation day in and out. Coping with the stress was becoming all the more difficult for her. Seasons were changing and so her life was changing, the in- laws pulled their son with the wife and little daughter out of the house even when they knew his mental and financial condition. They began living in a rented house with very meagre finances. The parents of this lady helped them through thick and thin.

Since the parental influence was so much on the husband despite of all the odds they had created in their life, they both could not manage the relationship any more. The compatibility score was lowering and so was their understanding of each other. This further lead to fights, arguments, physical abuse. A day came in their life that they could not tolerate each other.

This educated lady thought of the daughter and the environment she was getting in the fathers' house, kept on thinking about getting separated, but could not gather the courage to take such a step in her life. As in the Hindu culture separation, a few decades before was not acceptable. Her parents were not supporting her for the decision she wanted to take.

One fine morning after contemplating a lot the lady shifted in a rented house with her little daughter and very little finances. She got herself enrolled in higher education with her parents support and thenceforth began a new, evolved and a different life. The daughter was enrolled in the best school of the city.

Education as is said by many reduces the agony and opens the mind of a person, so was the case with her, she got so much engrossed in her studies that the agony of separation was

reduced. As she was a topper in her previous education and studies were her passion, so she completed her higher studies with flying colours even after so much of mental turmoil.

She could not afford to have a luxurious life, as she took up part time teaching assignments which could fetch few thousands of rupees, utilized to pay the rent, fees and other household necessary monthly goods. Despite of low income they were happy, enjoying each day as it came. They lived in the present, dealing with the daily necessities and not worrying about as to where they were heading to. They were just moving with the current, no complains, no harsh feelings for anyone.

The daughter grew, and the lady managed to get a full time teaching assignment in a reputed University in the city. Thenceforth once again life changed, but this time for even better. With time the lady completed her Doctorate and was well placed. Her father pestered her to shift in his house. This news reached the in-laws and the husband, and they began the conversation and welcomed her to their house in south India. This lady thought of reconciliation and kept on visiting their residence. She used to stay with grace and poise in the in-law's house. All of them used to appreciate her on the success and the efforts she had put in to reach this height.

As is said that life keeps onto your toes all the time, the society around you never let you breathe the fresh and evolved air. Society has its own role to play in the life of its members. This lady who never paid heed to the society around, was forced and mentally tortured this time by her own near and dear ones, the mother and sisters after her father's death.

She was already facing the turmoil of separation, managing the life all alone, the negative attitude of the mother and the sisters came as a bolt in her life. The separation could not break her strength so much so as happened with the negativity of her own relatives. Many a times she was leading towards depression, and her speaking abilities were getting affected. The daughter was in High School and preparing for her life's first board exams, it was a very crucial moment for her. The arguments with the family were increasing day by day affecting the studies of her

daughter. The lady kept on staying with her mother because she had promised her ailing father lying on the death bed that she will take care of everybody in the house.

Ethically moving out of the house seemed wrong to her, but her mental health was deteriorating, with so much stress. Further she decided to shift again to a rented house so that she could give a congenial environment to her daughter who was appearing for her High School board exams. She thought that staying with the mother will all- the- more poison the minds and better would be to stay apart and keep the promise given to her father.

Since then the relationships with the mother and sisters have improved. On the other side the lady was appreciated by the in-laws and the husband for the success she could carry all these years.

The struggle is still on, many thoughts run by when she thinks of the future ahead, she has no asset, only her daughter the biggest asset of her life.

The strategies that helped this lady to cope with the trauma of separation:

1. Education: Is the tool that empowers the women with all that is required to deal with the trauma of separation. Her Passion for education helped her to deal with all the odd sin her life.
2. Spiritual inclination: God the mightiest and powerful of all, helps to rejuvenate the energy in the human being. The soul gets so much power and self- confidence to face the miserable realities of life. Same was the case with this lady, she was spiritual in its true sense. She believed in the existence of a supernatural power and had the faith that lamenting in-front of God and asking for support, will definitely be relieved of all the pain.
3. Support of the father: Father to a daughter and daughters to father means a lot. They have all together a unique bond, here also this lady and her father shared a close and

interwoven relationship. It was just because of this bond that he could understand the agony and provide the right kind of suggestion in her life.

4. Acceptance from the daughter: This lady's daughter was her utmost asset and strength who without any doubt kept standing with her when she was a little child and even when she grew up as a beautiful maiden. Her acceptance gave the lady the courage to take risk and follow her heart. It was the sole purpose of her life to groom the daughter.
5. Employment: This gives immense confidence and un shattered strength to deal with life's' ups and down. The lady could derive a sense of satisfaction that she has a career and is employed. She could handle her life with grace with whatever she earned.
6. Positive attitude: The lady was a positive human being, with a whole lot of positivity. She could take the negative happenings in her life with utmost positivity. She forgave the in-laws for all that they had done in her life, instead she took the disaster as an opportunity given to fly and face the challenges of life.
7. Focus: The eagle is known for its focused vision on the target. Focus helps a person to concentrate and perform the actions accordingly. The lady was so focused in all her thoughts.
8. Righteousness: The lady had this quality of being morally right and justifiable. She was decent, virtuous, honest, high – minded, ethical and a great sense of integrity. These qualities helped her to march forward without paying heed to the up-hevels of her life. She was head strong in her thoughts.
9. Faith on herself: To believe in oneself is the highest level of strength. This does not mean to be overconfident but to have faith on oneself and move ahead.
10. Drive: The determination to work harder than most and make sure things get done, have pride in oneself on seeing things getting completed and take charge when necessary.

The drive for this lady was to live for her daughter, this was so strong that it overshadowed the negativity and gave her the strength.

11. Will Power: To take risk, and accept the wrong decisions shows the strong will power of any person, the lady had the strength to see things through and never procrastinated.
12. Self-Reliance: You can shoulder responsibilities and be accountable. You make hard decisions and stand by them. To think for yourself is to know yourself. These qualities made her self – reliant.
13. Integrity: Is the most important attribute of one's personality. She was honest in all what she did, and this defined her character.
14. Passion: It is said life is 10% what we experience and 90% of how we respond to situations. The intensity to achieve showed her passion, and the positivity made her succeed.
15. Optimism: Optimism is a strategy for making a better future--unless she believed that the future can be better, it was unlikely to step up and take responsibility for making it so. This lady and her daughter were highly optimistic.
16. Courageous: The ability to confront our fear is the mark of the superior person. The lady had high ambition and could confront her fears and did the things that hold her back, and so she could achieve success.
17. Persistent: Problems as opportunities to find or create effective solutions. They don't give up. This is where being stubborn is an asset! When they fall, they pick themselves up again and keep going. They know that if they keep at it, they'll eventually get the results or outcome they want. They refuse to have a victim mentality by recognizing that setbacks and hardships they experience can help them make smarter decisions in the future and steer them in the right direction.

Risks in life need not be things like bungee jumping or sky diving; in fact, it need not even to be physical in nature. It goes with your intuition. It may require taking up life to a road less travelled, which further helps you to stand apart and have the potential to propel yourself. There is no guarantee in life so before taking a risk analyze the risk and see if you are already prepared for it to fail, then it is worth taking that risk. *“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”* — T.S. Eliot. and *Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful.*” - Albert Schweitzer.

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